

set of criteria, associated with a different type of article of the same currency, to be considered during the validation period of a subsequent validation operation.

REMARKS

Claims 1, 12, and 14 to 17 have been amended. Claims 1 – 19 are pending.

Independent claim 1 and its dependent claims 2 – 5, 7, and 9 – 11 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Best (U.S. Patent Number 5,355,989). The Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection.

Claim 1 has been amended to more distinctly claim the invention. In particular, the measured properties of an article are checked prior to –determining whether the article is to be accepted or rejected--, followed by –determining—whether the article is valid –and whether the article is to be accepted or rejected--, and subsequently determining whether the measured properties meet at least one further set of criteria of an article of a different type. Thus, claim 1 is directed to considering a first range of denominations in order to make an accept/reject decision (for which there is only a limited time available) and then subsequently looking at acceptance criteria for other denominations. The information garnered from this subsequent checking can be used for various purposes. One use is to change the sequence in which denominations are considered, so that if a post-rejection determination is made that a valid coin of denomination D has been inserted, then in the next validation operation the acceptance criteria for denomination D is considered before the accept/reject decision is made. Thus, if a coin of denomination D had just been rejected, when the consumer re-inserts the coin the acceptance criteria for denomination D will be checked before the accept/reject decision is made. Such operation increases the chances that that coin will now be accepted.

In contrast, the system described in Best performs two simultaneous checks of measured properties of an article against two separate acceptance bands. The system makes an acceptability determination based on the outcome of one comparison and sets the acceptance criteria to be used for the next article based on the outcome of the second criteria comparison. The Best system then issues either an accept or a reject signal, as required. Following issuing of this signal, no further comparisons are made by the Best system.

Therefore, Best does not suggest or teach the method of claim 1 because Best does not make an accept or reject decision and afterwards check additional acceptance criteria. Using the two sequentially distinct checks technique of the present system, it is possible to take into account criteria related to many more possible articles than can be considered using a validation only technique, without increasing the amount of time required to validate an article. For example, if an article under test, e.g. a coin, is one of the types considered prior to issuing an accept/reject decision signal, then it will be accepted in the normal way. If not, the article measurements may be checked against other denomination criteria after the accept/reject signal is issued, so that the type of article might be determined without increasing the time required for validation. The Best patent does not anticipate such techniques. Accordingly, claim 1 is not anticipated, and the applicant requests the withdrawal of the 35 U.S.C. §102(b) rejection.

Claims 2 – 5, 7, and 9 – 11 are either directly or indirectly dependent from claim 1 and should be allowable for at least the same reasons as claim 1.

Independent claim 12 and dependent claim 13 have also been rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102 (b) as being anticipated by Best. The Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection and have amended claim 12 to clarify its distinction from the Best patent.

Claim 12 teaches a method for altering the sequence for a subsequent validation determination. The system performs checks of measured properties against a plurality of sets of criteria, then determines --... as a result of the checking operation, whether the article is one of said types, wherein the criteria relating to respective types of articles are considered in a sequence, and the sequence is altered for a subsequent validation operation.-- . In contrast, Best discloses a system wherein the specific criteria for a subsequent validation operation may be modified based on the outcome of a particular test. Specifically, either a broader or narrower acceptance band may be used in a subsequent validation operation based on whether the measured properties of a coin fall within the range of a particular acceptance band. The Best patent therefore does not suggest or teach to alter the actual sequence of checks. Accordingly, claim 12 is not anticipated.

Claim 13 is directly dependent from claim 12 and should be allowable for at least the same reasons.

Claim 14 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102 (b) as being anticipated by Best. The Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection, and claim 14 has been amended to more distinctly claim the invention. The Best patent discloses that the criteria for the counterfeit coin can be prevented from being considered by selecting the K' acceptance band. In contrast, claim 14 relates to automatically removing a set of acceptance criteria --associated with a predetermined article-- from the sequence of checks in a subsequent validation operation. The removed set of acceptance criteria could be for any article, counterfeit or not. Claim 14 has been amended to emphasize that an entire set of acceptance criteria for a particular article would not be considered in a subsequent validation period. Best does not teach removing from consideration a set of

criteria for a particular article. Since removing a set of acceptance criteria from the plurality of sets of acceptance criteria in a subsequent validation operation is not taught or suggested by Best, claim 14 is not anticipated.

Claim 15 was also rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102 (b) as being anticipated by Best. Claim 15 has been amended, and teaches to add a single set of criteria associated with a different type of article, to be considered during a validation process of a subsequent validation operation. Such operation is not taught or suggested by Best, and thus claim 15 is not anticipated.

Claims 16 and 17 also were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102 (b) as being anticipated by Best. The Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection. Claims 16 and 17 have been amended to more distinctly claim the invention. In particular, claim 16 pertains to an apparatus that is operable to prevent a set of criteria from being operable and thus prevents --... incrementing of the credit count for the predetermined type of article.--, whereas claim 17 pertains to an apparatus that is operable to enable a set of criteria to be operable and thus enables --... incrementing of the credit count when the predetermined type of article is recognized.--. Claims 16 and 17 thus pertain to changing the set of denominations that are to be considered during a subsequent validation process. In contrast, Best teaches changing the acceptance criteria range for each specific denomination to be considered. Therefore, claims 16 and 17 are not anticipated by Best.

Claims 18 and 19 were also rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102 (b) as being anticipated by Best. These claims also disclose methods for preventing at least one set of criteria from being considered, and/or causing a different set of criteria to be considered along subsequent validation

Applicant : Yellop et al.
Serial No. : 09/200,509
Filed : November 25, 1998
Page : 9

Attorney's Docket No.: 07703-280001 / MEK-181

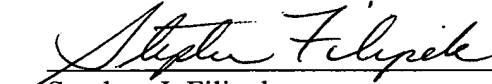
operations. Such techniques are not taught or suggested by Best, and consequently claims 18 and 19 are not anticipated.

The Office Action notes that claims 6 and 8 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, and that they would be allowable if rewritten. In view of the above remarks, the applicant declines to amend these claims as suggested.

Applicant submits that all of the claims are now in condition for allowance, which action is requested. Please apply any charges or credits to Deposit Account No. 06-1050.

Respectfully submitted,

Date: 21 NOVEMBER 2000


Stephan J. Filipek
Reg. No. 33,384

Fish & Richardson P.C.
45 Rockefeller Plaza, Suite 2800
New York, NY 10111
Telephone: (212) 765-5070
Facsimile: (212) 258-2291

AMENDED CLAIMS SHOWING CHANGES

1. (Twice Amended) A method of validating articles of currency, comprising:
checking, prior to determining whether or not the article is to be accepted or rejected
[issuing a signal indicative of whether the article is valid], the measured properties of an article
against a plurality of sets of criteria, each set corresponding to a predetermined type of article;
determining [issuing the signal indicative of] whether the article is a valid type of one of
the predetermined types and whether the article is to be accepted or rejected; and
subsequently determining whether the measured properties meet at least one further set of
criteria of an article of a different type.
2. *A method as claimed in claim 1, including altering the combination of sets which are checked prior to
issuing the signal.*
3. *A method as claimed in claim 2, wherein altering the combination is performed in response to determining
that the measured properties meet a further one of the sets of criteria, and wherein the act of altering results in that
further set of criteria being checked, in a subsequent validation operation, prior to issuing the signal.*
4. *A method as claimed in claim 3 wherein the act of altering results in that further set of criteria being
checked in a next validation operation prior to issuing the signal.*
5. *A method as claimed in claim 2, wherein the act of altering includes altering the combination in a manner
determined by which sets of criteria have been met in a plurality of previous validation operations.*
6. *A method as claimed in claim 2, wherein the act of altering includes causing a plurality of further sets of
criteria, associated with a plurality of currency articles of a common currency, to be included within the sets which
are checked prior to issuing the signal.*
7. *A method as claimed in claim 2, wherein the act of altering comprises causing one of the further sets of
criteria to be considered prior to issuing the signal, and causing one of the first-mentioned sets criteria to be
considered after the signal is issued.*
8. *A method as claimed in claim 7, wherein the act of altering is capable of causing any of the first-mentioned
sets to be considered after issuing the signal.*

9. *A method as claimed in claim 1, in which a said further one of the sets of criteria represents an article which is to be rejected.*

10. *A method as claimed in claim 9, wherein at least one set of acceptance criteria considered prior to issuing the signal is adjusted in response to determining that an article meets the further one of the sets of criteria.*

11. *A method as claimed in claim 1, including storing data indicating the number of articles which have met at least one further set of criteria in such a manner as to enable downloading of the data.*

12. (Twice Amended) A method of validating articles of currency comprising:
measuring properties of an article;
checking the properties against a plurality of sets of criteria, each set corresponding to a predetermined type of article; and
[making a sequence of determinations as to whether the article is of one of said types; and altering the sequence for a subsequent validation operation]
determining, as a result of the checking operation, whether the article is one of said types, wherein the criteria relating to respective types of articles are considered in a sequence, and the sequence is altered for a subsequent validation operation.

13. *A method as claimed in claim 12, including issuing a signal indicating that the article is not genuine after a plurality of determinations and depending on the results of those determinations, and prior to further determinations being made.*

14. (Twice Amended) A method of validating articles of currency comprising:
measuring properties of an article;
checking the properties against a plurality of sets of criteria, each set corresponding to a predetermined type of article, during a validation period prior to issuing a signal indicating whether the article is an article of one of the predetermined types; and
automatically preventing a single one of the sets of criteria, associated with a predetermined type of article, from being considered during a validation period of a subsequent validation operation.

15. (Twice Amended) A method of validating articles of currency comprising:

measuring properties of an article;
checking the properties against a plurality of sets of criteria, each set corresponding to a predetermined type of article, during a validation period prior to issuing a signal indicating whether the article is an article of one of the predetermined types; and
automatically causing a single different set of criteria, associated with a different type of article, to be considered during a validation period of a subsequent validation operation. °

16. (Amended) Apparatus for validating articles of currency comprising:

memory for storing data defining a plurality of sets of criteria, each set corresponding to a predetermined type of article; and

a processor operable to compare measured properties of an article with the criteria, and further operable to permit the criteria to be rendered effective or ineffective and to increment a credit count if the article is of the predetermined type for which the criteria are effective,

wherein the apparatus is capable of responding to recognition of a single article of one of the predetermined types by automatically preventing one of the sets of criteria from being effective during a subsequent validation operation, and then preventing incrementing of the credit count for the predetermined type of article.

17. (Amended) Apparatus for validating articles of currency comprising:

memory for storing data defining a plurality of sets of criteria, each set corresponding to a predetermined type of article; and

a processor operable to compare measured properties of an article with the criteria, and further operable to permit the criteria to be rendered effective or ineffective and to increment a credit count if the article is of the predetermined type for which the criteria are effective,

wherein the apparatus is capable of responding to recognition of a single article of one of the predetermined types by automatically enabling a set of criteria, to be effective during a subsequent validation operation, thus enabling incrementing of the credit count when the predetermined type of article is recognized.

18. *A method of validating articles of currency comprising:*

measuring properties of an article;

checking the measured properties against a plurality of sets of criteria, each set corresponding to a predetermined type of article, during a validation period prior to issuing a signal indicating whether the article is

an article of a said predetermined type, the number of sets checked being substantially equal to the maximum possible to be checked during said validation period; and

wherein the method includes at least one of automatically preventing one of the sets from being considered during the validation period of a subsequent validation operation, and automatically causing a different set of criteria, associated with a different type of article, to be considered during the validation period of a subsequent validation operation.

19. *A method of validating articles of currency comprising:*

measuring properties of an article;

checking the measured properties against a plurality of sets of criteria, each set corresponding to a predetermined type of article and the predetermined types belonging to the same currency, during a validation period prior to issuing a signal indicating whether the article is an article of a said predetermined type; and

wherein the method includes at least one of automatically preventing one but not all of said sets from being considered during the validation period of a subsequent validation operation, and automatically causing a different set of criteria, associated with a different type of article of the same currency, to be considered during the validation period of a subsequent validation operation.